

BOOK REVIEW

Voyage aux Iles de Ténériffe, La Trinité, Saint-Thomas, Saint-Croix et Porto Rico by Andre-Pierre LeDru. Published by Arthus Bertrand, Paris 1810, Vol. 1, 47+315 pages; Vol. 2, 324 pages, 1 map.

This is an interesting and apparently little known account of one of the early expeditions which were sent out expressly to study natural history. According to the introduction, the voyage was planned by the Professors of the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris and presented to the Government. Captain Nicholas Baudin was chosen as director of the expedition because he had collected much valuable material on earlier voyages. The scientists on the voyage included René Maugé, Zoologist; André-Pierre LeDru, Botanist; Anselme Rieddle, Horticulturist; Alexander Phillip Advenier, Mineralogist; Antoine Gonzales, Artist; and Benjamin Le Villain, J. Louis Hogard and Louis Le Gros, amateur naturalists. Aboard the flûte *Belle-Angelique* (a troop transport of 800 tons) there was a total of 108 officers, enlisted men and naturalists. They sailed from Le Havre, France, September 30, 1796 and returned June 7, 1798. Since France was then at war with England and the expedition was to visit West Indian Islands belonging to Great Britain, Captain Baudin carried a letter of safe conduct received from the British Admiralty through the solicitation of Sir Joseph Banks. The purpose of the voyage was to make observations on the climate, people, economy, agriculture, geology and natural history of the islands and to collect specimens for the botanical and zoological gardens and the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. The general account of the voyage was written by the botanist Le Dru, but there are many additions on the Natural History by M. Sonnini.

The first volume is concerned with Ténériffe, Canary Islands and La Trinité [Trinidad] and volume II is concerned with Saint Thomas, Saint Croix and Puerto Rico. While many of the plants and vertebrates are mentioned in some detail so little was known of the invertebrates of the islands at that time that little could be said about them in this general account. The chapter on the natural history of Puerto Rico covers some 80 pages and in the section on mollusks it is said

that Baudin and Maugé collected a large number of land and marine shells which were for the most part unknown.

Concluding the account of the voyage is a brief report on the zoological collections written to Baudin by Lamarck in which he said that the collection of invertebrates, though less interesting, were perhaps richest in rare and new specimens. At the end is a large, folded map of the "l'île de Saint Jean de Puertorico" made by Thomas Lopez with additions by Le Dru. This map is interesting, for on it there are many names and spellings which are no longer in use.

The entire account of the voyage is most interesting and readable, recounting a great deal of the early history of the islands, giving descriptions of them as they appeared to a naturalist at that time, as well as vivid accounts of the difficulties they had in getting living plants and animals back to France. In addition, the book is a good source of references to still earlier works on the islands.--R. D. TURNER

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I have used the spelling of Porto Rico in all original citations. The spelling of this island name was made official as Puerto Rico a few years ago.